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REMARKS

Claims 1-7 and 9-18 and 20 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 13, 15, 17-18 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claims 1-2, 5-6, 10, 13, 15, 17-18 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Claims 3-4, 7, 9, 11-12, 14 and 16 were objected to. Claim 19 was allowed.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication that claims 3-4, 7, 9, 11-12, 14 and 16 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Also, applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication that claim 19 is allowed.

Applicant has elected to rewrite claims 3-4, 7, 9, 12, 14 and 16 in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant believes that claim 11 is allowable in its present form by virtue of its dependency from claim 10, which is allowable based on its dependency from allowable claim 9.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1, 13, 15, 17-18 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Applicant has responded by canceling claims 1, 13, and 15. Also, applicant has amended claims 17-18 and 20 to clarify their meaning.

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Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-2, 5-6, 10, 13, 15, 17-18 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Number 5,926,537 issued to Birze on July 20, 1999 in view of the Background of Applicant's specification Serial Number 10/697,216 and further in view of U.S. Patent Number 5,432,845 issued to Burd et al. on July 11, 1995 and U.S. Patent Application Number 2001/0028706 issued to Nolting dated October 11, 2001.

Claims 1-2, 5-6, 13, and 15 have been canceled. Claim 10, previously dependent from now canceled claim 1, has been amended to depend from claim 9 which the Examiner has indicated contains allowable subject matter. Claims 17-18 have been amended to depend from claim 14, which the Examiner has indicated contains allowable subject matter. Claim 20 has been amended with limitations from allowable claim 14. Thus, applicant believes that claims 10, 17-18 and 20 are allowable.

Claim Amendment

Claim 11 was amended to add the term "and". No new matter was added.

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Conclusion

It is respectfully submitted that the Office Action's rejections have been overcome and that this application is now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are, therefore, respectfully solicited.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, allowance of all claims pending is respectfully requested. If a telephone conference would be of assistance in advancing the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call applicant's attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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